[Translation]

Complaint against Distribution of Acknowledgements

818. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Postal Department has received complaints from the senders of registered AD letters that they are not getting acknowledgements of their letters for which they pay additional money; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures taken by the Government so as to ensure that the senders are provided with acknowledgements of their letters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes Sir. Complaints have been received from some senders of registered letters with acknowledgements about non-receipt of acknowledgement cards.

(b) Such complaints are enquired into promptly and wherever it is found that AD card has not been delivered, an attested copy of addressee's receipt is supplied free of charge. Instructions are issued from time to time to all concerned to ensure proper delivery of Registered letters/Acknowledgement Cards which are also monitored during transmission through post. The Department has improved upon the size and thickness of the AD Card to enable quick identification and their easy handling. Customer Care Centres have been set up in important cities to ensure prompt redressal of grievances including those relating to non-delivery of AD Cards.

Opening of Telephone Exchanges and Post Offices in Sikkim

819. SHRI BHIM DAHAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of telephone exchanges, post-offices and sub-post-offices opened in Sikkim during the last three years;

(b) the places where telephone exchanges, post-offices and sub-post-offices are proposed to the opened in 1998-99 and the number of proposals under consideration of the Govt. for setting up post-offices and sub-post-offices; and

(c) the time by which these are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The number of telephone exchanges opened in Sikkim are as under :

Year	*No. of exchanges*
1995-96	2
1996-97	2
1997-98	6

The information in respect of post offices is at Annexure-I.

(b) The places where telephone exchanges are likely to be opened during 1998-99 are as under :

(i) Tashiding

(ii) Lachen

(iii) Lachung

(iv) Assamlingzey

(v) Barmik

(vi) Magalbari

The information in respect of Post offices is attached as Statement. The above exchanges are likely to be set up by March, 1999. The information in respect of Post offices is given in the attached statement.

Statement

(a) The number of Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices and Departmental Sub Post Offices opened in Sikkim during the last three years are as under :

1995-96		1996-97		1997-98	
EDBO	DSO	EDBO	DSO	EDBO	DSO
–	–	–	–	2	1

(b) The opening of following Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices and Sub Post Offices in Sikkim for 1998-99 are contemplated subject to fulfilment of prescribed norms :

Departmental Sub Post Offices	Extra-Departmental, Branch Post Offices
(1) Ravangla	(1) Neya
	(2) Lingzey
	(3) Ahobasti
	(4) Shakhubasti

(c) Post Offices are opened subject to fulfilment of existing norms, availability of resources and Plan target.

Privatisation of Doordarshan

820. SHRI AJIT JOGI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to privatise/ commercialise any channel of Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any code of conduct has been formulated in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have decided to grant permission to hire out Channel-III of Doordarshan to foreign companies;

(f) if so, the reason therefor; and

(g) the extent to which the steps of the Government are likely to affect the other Channels of Doordarshan?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

(e) DD-3 Channel of Doordarshan has been closed down with effect from 16-01-1998.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

[English]

Curtailment of Powers of TRA

821. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to curtail the powers of Telecom. Regulatory Authority; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Telephone Exchanges in M.P.

822. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of telephone exchanges functioning and proposed to be set up in Madhya Pradesh particularly in Mandala district; and

(b) the time by which these exchanges are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) and (b) the number of telephone exchanges in Madhya Pradesh and Mandla district is as below :

Madhya Pradesh — 3119

Mandla District — 37

The new exchanges are opened as per the existing norms where registered demand exceeds 10. Wherever this condition is met, Exchange is planned and provided expeditiously.

Contact Classes in Hindi

823. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether contact classes for B.C.A./M.C.A. courses in Hindi medium are organised in English medium by Indira Gandhi National Open University, Regional Office, Delhi; and

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to organise contact classes in Hindi medium from this very session for those who tend to undertake correspondence course in the Hindi medium?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the Indira Gandhi National Open University, the Bachelor of Computer Applications (B.C.A.) and the Master's in Computer Applications (M.C.A.) programmes are at present offered by the University through the medium of English. However, the University is exploring the possibility of offering these programmes through the medium of Hindi also.

[English]

Smuggling of Animal Skins

824. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cases of seizures of animal skins and hides reported in the country during the last three years;

(b) whether such seizures of skins and hides finds their way in Kashmir where their sale is unchecked;

(c) whether any action plan has been worked to check the same; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) The number of cases of seizures of animal skins and hides detected by Regional Offices of Wildlife Preservation of Government of India during the last three years i.e. 1995-98 are as follows :

Centre	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Delhi	9	6	5
Calcutta	2	3	26
Chennai	4	1	1
Mumbai	7	5	4